

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the Office Action mailed March 04, 2008.

By this Amendment, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 3, and claims 2, 4 and 5 have been amended in view of the changes to claim 1. Thus, in view of these amendments, claim 3 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to its underlying subject matter. Thus, claims 1, 2 and 4-9 are currently pending in this application. Support for the claim amendments can be readily found variously throughout the specification and the original claims.

In view of these amendments, Applicant believes that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration in light of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim of Priority

In item 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner acknowledged Applicant's claim for foreign priority but requests that a certified copy of the priority document (i.e. JP 2003-127576) be submitted. Applicant believes that it is not necessary for the Applicant to file the certified copy of the priority document since the priority document was submitted to WIPO during the international stage of the present application (see §1893.03(c)(II) of the MPEP which states

“Where applicant has complied with PCT Rule 17, the International Bureau will forward a copy of the certified priority document to each Designated Office that has requested such document with an indication that the priority document was submitted in compliance with the rule and the date the document was received by the International Bureau. . . . The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, as a Designated Office, will normally request the International Bureau to furnish the copy of the certified priority document upon receipt of applicant's submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 to enter the U.S. national phase. The copy from the International Bureau is placed in the U.S. national stage file. The copy of the priority document received from the International Bureau with either of the indications above is acceptable to establish that applicant has filed a certified copy of the priority document. The examiner should acknowledge in the next Office action that the copy of the certified copy of the foreign priority document has been received in the national stage application from the International Bureau”).

Thus, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to request the International Bureau to forward

the certified copy of the priority document to the Examiner.

Objection to the Specification

The specification is objected to for the minor informalities set forth in item 4 of the action. Applicant believes that this objection has been overcome in view of the amendments to the specification headings and the amendments to the “*Brief Description of the Drawings*” section which has been moved to after the section “*Summary of the Invention*”. Thus, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103


Claims 1, 2 and 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Murakami et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,998,432 B2). Further, claims 5 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Murakami et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,998,432 B2) in view of Imamura et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,783,209). These rejections have been rendered moot by the incorporation of allowable claim 3 into claim 1. Thus, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, all the claims now pending in the present application are believed to be clearly patentable over the outstanding rejections. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration of the claims in light of the above remarks is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the below-listed number.

Dated: June 4, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

By:  _____

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Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper, or if a petition for extension of time is required for timely acceptance of same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-4422 for any such fees; and applicant(s) hereby petition for any needed extension of time.